

MOUNT SHASTA.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

To lord all! Golland! lift the brow
Familiar to the moon, to top
The universal world, to prop
The hollow heavens up, to yow
Stern constancy with stars, to keep
Eternal watch while eons sleep;
To tower proudly up and touch
God's purple garment-hems that sweep
The cold blue north! Oh, this were much!

Where storm-born shadows hide and hunt
I knew thee, in thy glorious youth,
And loved thy vast face, white as truth:
I stood where thunderbolts were wont
To smite thy Titan-fashioned front,
And heard dark mountains rock and roll;
I saw the lightning's gleaming rod
Reach forth and write on heaven's scroll
The awful autograph of God!

SOME FACTS ABOUT DIAMONDS.

Historical Gems—Present Condition and Tendency of the Trade.

New York Graphic.

A Graphic reporter yesterday dropped

into the store of a prominent diamond

broker on Broadway, and had an enter-

taining conversation with the dealer on

the subject of diamonds.

"The diamond is an interesting theme

for extended study," said the dealer,

whose time appeared for the moment

to be unoccupied. "Indeed, the history

of some notable gems is as romantic

and complete as those of the greatest

of mankind. I have some historical

specimens here for that matter. But you

asked me about the value of diamonds.

I suppose in the vaults of the Equitable

Building can be found the most valuable

of any in the city. There are few

exceedingly valuable ones exposed for

sale. Diamonds are not worn as much

as they were some years ago. I notice

that some of the wealthiest ladies wear

plain jewelry now in preference to di-

amonds. On state occasions Mrs. John

Jacob Astor wears diamonds worth

several fortunes. Mrs. A. T. Stewart

seldom wears them. It is chiefly the

middle class of society that display

them to any extent. Our best taste is

among the middle class and the sport-

ing and demi-monde element of society.

But as to original value. Now, I have

made a study of diamonds, and history

tells me that long before the Christian

era the crystallized form of pure carbon

was known for its value as an

instrument for cutting, and had its

place in bijouterie. According to

Indian traditions, the famous Koh-i-

noor was found in the mines of Golcon-

da long before Christ's birth. For cen-

turies it was the symbol of succession

among the sovereigns of Central India,

and in the fourteenth century it became

one of the treasures of Delhi. After-

wards it came into the possession of the

Persian monarchs, and at the victory of

the rebel Nadir Shah it was glittering

in the turban of the vanquished Moham-

med Shah. Nadir politely asked Moh-

ammed to exchange turbans with him

as a mark of friendship. For several

centuries the Persian monarchs pos-

sessed it, and in 1813 it was made the

price of Shah Shujah's liberty by his

conqueror, Runjeet Singh, of Punjab.

With the annexation of Punjab to the

East India Company's territory in 1850

the Koh-i-noor became the property of

the Queen of England, whose crown it

now adorns, together with 496 other

gems, the latter being valued at \$372,-

000. The Koh-i-noor since being recut

weighs 122 1/2 carats, and is valued at

\$900,000. This is only one among

many historic gems. The King of Por-

tugal owns one which, if genuine—of

which there is some doubt—is worth

about \$28,000,000.

"How about the Shah of Persia's di-

monds?"

"It is said that they are mostly bogus.

And accounts for the fact that di-

amonds are not so much worn now as

formerly. There is so much of the

cheap trash in the market, which can

hardly be distinguished from the gen-

uine except by an expert. I have di-

amonds here that cost \$10,000 that I

will sell for half price. But," continued

the dealer, "you've heard of the Orloff

diamond, one of the ornaments of the

imperial scepter of Russia. It was

originally the eye of an Indian idol, from

whence it was stolen by a French soldier,

who thought he was getting a fortune

when he sold it in Madras for \$9,400.

Catherine of Russia paid \$418,500 for it.

The Sancy is a \$180,000 brilliant belong-

ing to Russia. Henry VIII. once sent this

jewel to the Swiss Government by a

servant. The servant was assassinated,

but swallowed the diamond before he

died, and it was afterwards taken from

his stomach. Of other famous diamonds

there are the French Eugenie; the Tus-

cany; the Nassau, belonging to the

Marquis of Westminster, and valued

at \$148,000; the Napoleon Regent, the

Hope, a blue diamond, the Dresden,

of London; the Brazilian; the Czar;

the Shah; the Polar Star, and others of

almost fabulous wealth. None of the

most notable diamonds are owned in

the United States, though it was recent-

ly reported that Mrs. John G.

Mackay, the wife of the mining

king, who gives \$1,000,000 of diamonds,

is said to have purchased one that used

to adorn a crown. Diamond commerce

proper began in 1728, when the Brazil-

ian mines were opened. In 1868, some

children playing upon the banks of the

Orange river found a diamond weigh-

ing two and a quarter carats, and this

led to the opening of the South African

diamond fields. Extensive mines have

also been opened in Australia. Like

almost all other minerals, diamonds and

diamond dust have been the circulating

medium of exchange in many countries,

and, indeed, in Brazil have purchased

even human liberty, the slave miner dis-

covering a diamond of 17 1/2 carats and over.

Diamond mines have also been discov-

ered in the United States, in Rutherford

county, North Carolina; Hall county,
Georgia; Franklin county, North Caro-

lina, and in Virginia. The most valuable

diamond found in the United States

was picked up by a poor workman at

Manchester, Virginia, in 1856. It

weighed 23.7 carats, but was so badly

used by its ignorant finder, that its

value was greatly deteriorated."

"How about the trade in New

York?"

"Nearly every jeweler and broker

dabbles in diamonds, but I can't say

that the trade has benefited the origi-

nal dealers. It is estimated that over

\$10,000,000 worth of diamonds have

been retained here during the past year.

It is hard to say how large the whole-

sale trade has been. The past year

the demand was for fine stone which in

former years had to be sold for \$300 or

\$350 now sells for from \$600 to \$700.

We don't sell diamonds by any sched-

ule of weight. A two-carat stone may

sell for \$75, and one just as heavy for

\$750. Nor can they be sold for a cer-

tain sum per carat. A fine brilliant

weighing one carat may cost \$200

while a two-carat stone of equal fine-

ness sells for \$500 or \$600. The aver-

age diamond sold here weighs about

one and a quarter carats, and costs

about \$200. They are mostly African

and Brazilian stones, and are shipped

from London and Amsterdam by Tiffany

& Co., Randall, Barmore & Co., Alfred

H. Smith & Co., Buckingham, Cole &

Saunders, Lyon & Saunders, Lyon &

Hardy, and other New York and Bos-

ton firms. There is a delusion under

which some diamond buyers labor.

There was a mine in Brazil which

formerly produced stones magnificent

for their clearness and refractive pow-

ers. It was called the 'old mine,' and

many of the particularly fine stones

now sold are called the 'old mine stones.'

There is no difference in the intrinsic

value of the stone, the rich merely

delecting to pay a good sum for the

name."

The present local fancy in the way of

diamond jewelry is the combination of

diamonds, rubies and sapphires, set

flush in hammered gold or in what is

called knife-edged setting, in which the

last setting is so fine as to be scarcely

perceptible at short distance, the gem

alone appearing to view. One fine piece

of this work is a dragon fly. The head

is a ruby, the thorax and abdomen are

diamonds, while twenty-two diamonds

sparkle in the wings. The dragon fly

is poised upon a spiral, the slightest

variation of which makes the costly little

insect emit sparks of beautiful white,

red and blue light. Rubies are becom-

ing so scarce that their price exceeds

that of diamonds. Small diamonds,

ranging from six to ten carats in pairs,

are the greatest in demand in this and

other markets.

White Buffaloes.

American Naturalist.

White buffaloes have frequently been

seen and killed. All the Indian tribes

regard them as "big medicine," but

they have different superstitions regard-

ing them. For instance, Catlin, the

painter, while among the Mandans in

1832, saw a white buffalo robe erected

on a pole in their village, as a sacrifice

to the Great Spirit. It had been pur-

chased from the Blackfeet, who killed

the buffalo, for eight horses and a quan-

tity of goods. On the other hand, the

Comanches believe it very dangerous to

see a white buffalo. In 1869 I saw a

young Comanche who had seen a white

buffalo return to his camp almost dead

with fear. He was taken to his tent, the

medicine men were sent for, and they

smoked him and kept up incantations

over him day and night for a week.

When he came out he believed that he

had a very narrow escape from death.

In 1869 a white buffalo was killed by a

white man on the north fork of Red river,

Indian Territory, and the hide pre-

sented to Gen. Grierson. He wished to

have it dressed to preserve it, but failed

to get any Indian to undertake the task

for a long time. At last he prevailed

on a Comanche chief named Horseback

to have the operation performed. Horse-

back selected one of his squaws, had the

"medicine man" of his band go through

various ceremonies over her to preserve

her life, and then placed her in a teepee

some distance from his camp, where the

hide was taken to her by a soldier, and

brought away by him when dressed. No

other Indian would look at the hide,

much less touch it. Her food was left

some distance from her teepee, and when

the robe was dressed "medicine" cer-

emonies were held over her before she

was allowed to join the camp. I twitted

Horseback about the fear of the robe,

calling his attention to the fact that no

harm befall any of the white men who

handled the robe, but he answered that

such might be the case, but what was

"bad medicine" for a Comanche might

be "good medicine" for a white man,

and vice versa. He proposed to tal-

no risks in the matter.

The Wells of Old London.

The holy wells of London have all

declined in their reputation, even to St.

Paul's Well, which subsequently got its

reputation of doubtful persons. The

last public use of the water of St.

Bride's Well drained it so much that

the inhabitants of St. Bride's parish

could not get their usual supply. This

exhaustion was followed by an equally

sudden demand. Several men were en-

gaged in filling bottles, thousands a

day, on or before the 19th of June, 1821,